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Elements for a plan of action for the elimination of nuclear weapons

Working paper submitted by the Group of the Non-Aligned States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

Introduction

1. Although there have been some positive signals and developments in the area of nuclear disarmament, the world is still faced with unresolved challenges. The recent statements by some nuclear-weapon States about their intention to pursue actions in achieving a world free of nuclear weapons are positive. However, urgent and concrete actions by the nuclear-weapon States in accordance with their multilaterally agreed commitments to achieve general and complete disarmament remain essential. Unless the role of nuclear weapons in the context of security is delegitimized and existing nuclear doctrines are abandoned, there will always be a threat of a nuclear arms race and an escalation of nuclear threats. The total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

2. To achieve the total elimination of their nuclear weapons, the nuclear-weapon States need to implement the unequivocal undertaking agreed upon in 2000. The 13 practical steps for systematic and progressive efforts to implement Article VI should be fully implemented in accordance with the principles of transparency, verifiability and irreversibility. The nuclear-weapon States should be urged to start negotiations on a phased programme for the complete elimination of their nuclear weapons within a specified time framework, including a nuclear weapons convention. It should also be recalled that there is a unanimous conclusion of the International Court of Justice regarding the obligation to pursue in good faith and to bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control.

3. The Non-Aligned Movement proposes a plan of action for the elimination of nuclear weapons within a specified time frame that includes the following concrete steps and measures, as a basis for consideration by the Review Conference. The list of measures in each phase is indicative rather than exhaustive, and the order in

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which they are mentioned does not necessarily reflect their priority. Nevertheless, it should be understood that, in any nuclear disarmament programme, all steps and measures are inextricably linked.

Plan of action

First phase — 2010 to 2015

A. Measures aimed at reducing the nuclear threat

4. Immediate commencement of concurrent negotiations on and early conclusion of:

(a) A treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons, the negotiations being conducted on the basis of the Shannon mandate, as endorsed at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference and the 2000 Review Conference;

(b) Termination of qualitative improvements of nuclear weapons through agreements on:

(i) the cessation of all nuclear weapon tests (ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, starting with the nuclear-weapon States), the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the closure of all nuclear weapons test sites;

(ii) measures to prevent the use of new technologies for upgrading the existing nuclear weapon systems, including the prohibition of nuclear weapon research and development;

(c) Review by nuclear-weapon States of their nuclear postures in order to eliminate the role of nuclear weapons in their military and security policies;

(d) A multilaterally negotiated legally binding instrument that is universal and unconditional, to ensure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons;

(e) A convention unconditionally prohibiting the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons;

(f) An international conference at "the earliest possible date" to achieve agreement on a phased programme for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons within a specified time frame, including, in particular, a treaty to eliminate nuclear weapons (nuclear weapons convention);

(g) Full implementation of the Treaties of Tlatelolco, Rarotonga, Bangkok, Pelindaba and Central Asia and of Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status, including signature and ratification by nuclear-weapon States and other States, of relevant protocols to those Treaties, and the establishment of additional nuclear-weapon-free zones;

(h) Establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in the Middle East and implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East, in order to fully realize its goals and objectives;

(i) Clear and verifiable declarations by States of their stocks of nuclear weapons and nuclear-weapons-usable material and agreement on a multilateral mechanism to monitor reductions by nuclear-weapon States of their nuclear arsenals individually, bilaterally or collectively;

(j) Reduction of the operational readiness of nuclear-weapon systems.

B. Measures aimed at nuclear disarmament

5. Full implementation by the nuclear-weapon States of their disarmament obligations and commitments under the Non-Proliferation Treaty, including those agreed at the 2000 Review Conference; acceleration of the negotiation process, in accordance with article VI, and implementation of the 13 practical steps.

6. Conclusion of negotiations on further reductions of nuclear arsenals (START).

7. Moratorium on the production of fissile materials, pending conclusion of a fissile material cut-off treaty.

8. Placement of nuclear fissile material transferred from military to peaceful uses by nuclear-weapon States under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards.

9. Formal declaration of the decade 2010-2020 as the "Decade for nuclear disarmament" and realization of its objectives.

Second phase — 2015 to 2020

Measures aimed at reducing nuclear arsenals and promoting confidence among States

10. Entry into force of the treaty to eliminate nuclear weapons and the establishment of a single integrated multilateral comprehensive verification system to ensure compliance, including such measures as the:

(a) Separation of nuclear warheads from their delivery vehicles;

(b) Placement of nuclear warheads in secure storage under international supervision, pending the removal of special nuclear materials from those warheads;

(c) Transfer of nuclear materials, including fissile materials and delivery vehicles, to "peaceful purposes".

11. Preparation, under international auspices, of an inventory of nuclear arsenals, including fissile materials, nuclear warheads and their delivery vehicles.

12. Progressive and balanced reduction of missiles intended for carrying nuclear warheads.

13. Recommendation by the 2020 Review Conference to declare 2020 as the "Decade for the total elimination of nuclear weapons".

Third phase — 2020 to 2025 and beyond

Measures aimed at the consolidation of a nuclear-weapon-free world

14. Full implementation of the treaty to eliminate all nuclear weapons and of its verification regime through the:

(a) Elimination of all nuclear weapons;

(b) Conversion of all facilities for the production of nuclear weapons to "peaceful purposes";

(c) Placement of nuclear facilities under safeguards, on a universal basis.